



**White River Connect
News Release**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**WHITE RIVER CONNECT SELECTS CONTRACTOR ITG COMMUNICATIONS, LLC FOR
CONSTRUCTION OF FIBER PROJECT BUILD-OUT**

Branson, MO—White River Connect, a subsidiary of White River Valley Electric Cooperative, has selected a general contractor for the construction of its large-scale fiber project with the assistance of their consulting and design partner National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC). ITG Communications of Hendersonville, Tennessee has been awarded the contract and will begin construction of the 4,200-mile distribution fiber project starting Tuesday, June 6th in the Branson, Missouri area.

White River Connect conducted an extensive bidding process. A nationwide request for proposal (RFP) resulted in seven bids. ITG Communications, LLC is a known leader in the telecommunications industry. The company offered internal resources and had processes already in place which allowed for a quick starting date for construction to begin. White River Connect CEO Beau Jackson said, “ITG Communications has a proven track record for building robust fiber networks throughout our country. Among other factors, their reputation for delivering high-quality work and their experience in successfully completing projects of this scale is why ITG was our choice. We look forward to partnering with ITG Communications as we work to build a world-class fiber network for the communities we serve.”

The White River Connect fiber project will be helping rural communities have access to high-speed internet. The project will ensure all White River Valley Electric Cooperative’s members in Christian, Douglas, Ozark, Stone, and Taney Counties have the option to connect to the robust system. The entire build-out of the White River Connect network will take approximately five years to complete.

While ITG Communications, LLC has internal crews that will be working in the area, they are excited to provide opportunities for local subcontractors to take part in the construction of White

River Connect's fiber project. Subcontractors can find more information by emailing mthompson@i-t-g.net

FIBER INTERNET CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

The construction process of White River Connect's build out will take place in the following steps:

1. **Design Phase.** Engineers will design the fiber network route.
2. **Make-ready.** Contractor crews will work to prepare existing electrical poles for fiber construction.
3. **Construction Phase.** Aerial crews will pull fiber overhead while underground crews will be doing directional drilling and excavating to place fiber underground in selected areas.
4. **Splice and Test.** During this phase, members will see trucks with enclosed trailers on location in which they will be splicing and testing the fiber network.
5. **Drop Construction.** At this time, crews will take the fiber cable, make a splice, and run the fiber to the home or business that is going to be served.
6. **In-Home Installation.** We expect this phase to start in the first quarter 2024.

PROJECT FUNDING

WRVEC applied for seven grants through the Missouri Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The Cooperative received funding for all seven applications. The total awarded for WRVEC's broadband project was \$47.3 million. WRVEC was the largest recipient of the ARPA grants in the state of Missouri.

Realizing the economic impact on their communities - Ozark, Stone, and Taney Counties collectively committed \$8.5 million of county ARPA allocations to serve as a local match to secure the larger grants. White River Connect is pursuing other grant funding options to contribute to the estimated \$262 million projected project costs.

For more information about White River Valley Electric Cooperative's fiber-to-the-home project, White River Connect, visit <https://www.whiteriverconnect.com>.

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About White River Connect

White River Connect, the fiber subsidiary of [White River Valley Electric Cooperative](#), is dedicated to bringing high-speed internet to rural Missouri counties including Ozark, Taney, Stone, Christian and Douglas

About WRVEC

[White River Valley Electric Cooperative](#) is a [Touchstone Energy Cooperative](#) dedicated to ensuring our members receive safe and reliable service in their homes and businesses across five southwest Missouri counties including Ozark, Taney, Stone, Christian and Douglas.

About ITG Communications

ITG is a national provider of fulfillment, construction and project management services to the cable, telecommunications and utility industries. The company manages outsourced operational activities nationwide, including subscriber installations, upgrades, service calls, dispatch, warehousing and outside plant and network construction and maintenance projects. ITG's comprehensive business intelligence tools provide real-time access to its workforce activities and drive its ability to consistently

meet or exceed its customer's service level requirements. For additional information, please visit ITG's website at www.ITG.net.